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USSR KOLKHOZ CONSTRUCTION DELAYED BY LACK OF BUILDING MATERIALS;
NEW MAIN ADMINISTRATION ESTABLISHED TO SPEED DELIVERY

Promyshlennost' Stroitel'nykh Materialov
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To meet the increasing demands of the rural population for goods more fully, a new main administration, Glavkoopkhochtorg (Main Administration for Trade of the Kolkhoz Cooperatives) has been established within Tsentsosoyuz (Central Union of Consumer Cooperatives).

The new administration will deal in lumber, construction materials, paint products, and "oboznymi izdeliyami" (hauling facility parts). It has wholesale houses in Moscow, Leningrad, Gor'kiy, Riga, Baku, Tallin, Novosibirsk, Kuybyshev, Ufa, Krasnodar, Kirov, and Petrozavodsk. Construction materials are retailed in 4,400 stores and 580 specialized retail lumber yards of consumer cooperatives.

Through the facilities of Tsentsosoyuz, in 1952 the rural population received 21 times more cement, 3 times more slate, and 10 times more roofing material than in 1940. Stores also began to retail safety and beveled glass, linoleum, tile, and other building and partitioning materials. Between 1946 and 1952, the retail sale of lumber and building materials increased eightfold.

When the sixth cut was made in retail prices in 1953, the price of cement was reduced 25 percent, slate and soft roofing materials 20 percent, and window glass 10 percent.

The individual builder now can ask for a greater variety of building materials. The following allotment of these materials is being released per builder: 300 kilograms of cement, 100 square meters of slate, 12 rolls of roofing paper, 300 kilograms of alabaster, etc.

Although the trading organizations are obliged to sell allotted goods without interruption to the population, Zhukov, Dreyzen, and Polyakov, directors of Glavstroybyit (Main Administration for the Sale of Construction Materials Products), Ministry of Construction Materials USSR, have not adhered to this procedure. During the first 6 months of 1953, plants failed to supply Tsentsosoyuz with 14.2 million units of slate, 2.2 million square meters of soft roofing paper, and 241,000 square meters of window glass.

Construction in the kolkhozes has been delayed by the lack of planning of the supply and delivery of materials to kolkhozes. During the first 6 months of 1953, some oblasts and republics received more cement than was originally planned, while other oblasts and republics were short of cement. For instance, the Ukrainian SSR received 4,000 tons more cement than it was apportioned, the Uzbek SSR 3,100 tons more, the Kazakh SSR 1,900 tons more, Voronezhskaya Oblast 1,200 tons more, and Orlovskaya Oblast 1,300 tons more. The Azerbaydzhan SSR and the Georgian SSR, on the other hand, each received 1,300 tons of cement less than originally planned, and Arkhangel'skaya Oblast got only 50 percent of the amount of cement originally planned.

Glavstroybyit and some plants have been violating the plan for hauling materials by water transport and the plan for delivering materials to the Far North. As a result, many kolkhozes and kolkhoz workers have been unable to get the goods which they need. Although numerous requests were made for these materials to Glavstroybyit, during the first 6 months of 1953 the Irkutsk, Kuybyshev, and Latvian SSR roofing paper plants failed to supply 720,500 square meters of soft roofing paper, and the Chagoda, Anzhero-Sudzhensk, and Ulan Ude glass plants failed to supply 76,000 square meters of glass, to kolkhozes of the Far North.

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The slate plants have also been failing to meet kolkhoz demands. During the first 6 months of 1953, the Latvian SSR slate plant delivered 40 by 40 centimeter slate slabs to kolkhozes in the Lithuanian SSR. Use of this size slate increases construction costs because 32 percent more lumber must be used to reinforce the roof. Although Tsentrosoyuz notified the Ministry of Construction Materials Industry USSR that there has been no market in the kolkhozes for this size slate, the ministry is still planning production of it and cutting the production of larger size slate.

The amount of goods and manner of packing frequently did not matter when trading organizations dealt directly with wholesalers (organizations, enterprises, kolkhozes), but today, in dealing with the individual consumer, these questions are important. Consumer cooperatives in rayons have been complaining about the glass being packed in 20-square-meter containers. Enormous breakage of glass has resulted from hauling in these containers.

Although the Ministry of Construction Materials Industry USSR actually is not opposed to the packing of glass in smaller packages, the Anzhero-Sudzhensk, Chagoda, Misheronsk, and other glass plants have continued to use larger packages because, they claim, they do not have enough smaller boxes. Hence, to meet the demands of the population, consumer cooperatives in the rayons are forced to accept the glass regardless of how it is packed.

Although the construction materials industry is producing large amounts of mirror glass, linoleum, facing materials, dry plaster board, wood-fiber slabs, and prefabricated houses, very small quantities of these items are being allocated to the rural population.

A great deal of red tape is involved in placing orders. Although the oblast, kray, or republic consumer cooperatives may be located in cities where Glavstroyshyt has regional offices or where producing plants are located, these cooperatives must place their orders with Tsentrosoyuz, which, in turn, forwards the orders to Glavstroyshyt. This main administration then returns the orders for fulfillment to its regional office located in the cities from which the orders came originally. For instance, the Georgian SSR consumer cooperative placed 1,890 orders for cement, roofing material, slate, and window glass with Tsentrosoyuz. These orders were forwarded to Glavstroyshyt, which then sent the orders for fulfillment to its regional office in Tbilisi. Similarly, 4,400 orders were sent from the Uzbek SSR, Tadzhik SSR, and Kazakh SSR to Moscow and then returned from Moscow to the regional office of Glavstroyshyt in Tashkent.

Tsentrosoyuz suggested to the Ministry of Construction Materials Industry USSR that this red tape method be eliminated and that the regional offices of Glavstroyshyt be given the right to accept orders directly from consumer cooperatives in oblasts, krays, and republics. The ministry at first rejected the proposed change, but then promised to make the change in 1954.

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